



Newsline

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What you need to know about meningitis

With several cases of meningitis in the news lately, Oklahomans may be wondering what exactly it is and how it can be prevented.

Meningitis is a severe infection of the lining (meninges) and fluid around the brain and spinal cord, said Youmasu Siewe, Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service health education and family development specialist.

"It can be caused by different types of organisms, but most commonly by bacteria and viruses," Siewe said. "The type of meningitis caused by a virus is more common, less serious and usually doesn't need specific treatment. However, the type of meningitis caused by bacteria is less common, but causes a more serious disease. It also can cause complications such as brain damage, hearing loss, learning disabilities and other problems of the central nervous system."

While anyone can get meningitis, it is more common in infants and children. Also at a higher risk are adolescents such as college students living in dormitories. Others at risk include household or classroom contacts of a person who is known to have the disease, people who have a suppressed immune system or those traveling to parts of the world where meningococcal meningitis is common.

In Oklahoma, reports the Oklahoma State Department of Health, 33 meningitis cases were reported in 2006. More than half of those cases occurred in February and March. Approximately 2,500 people in the United States are infected each year and about 300 die from the disease.

"Meningitis is spread by the meningococcus, the bacteria that causes meningitis, by the close contact with saliva or secretions from the nose or throat of an infected person. Meningitis is not transmitted by breathing the same air in a room

with an infected person," Siewe said. "It also is not transmitted in water supplies, swimming pools or by casual contact in restaurants, restrooms or other public places."

Some individuals may carry meningococcus in their nose and throat and never show any signs of illness.

Symptoms of meningitis appear two to 10 days after the initial exposure. Symptoms include high fever, headache, vomiting, stiff neck and a rash. He said other symptoms may include confusion, seizures and a rash around the armpit and groin. A spinal tap and laboratory tests are used to confirm the disease.

Siewe said about 10 percent to 15 percent of those who contract the disease may die in spite of treatment.

"Early treatment with penicillin and certain related antibiotics is very effective in treating meningitis," he said. "Only people in very close contact with an ill person have a higher risk of the disease

and should be considered for precautionary treatment. These include household members, intimate contacts, daycare center classmates, some health care workers and persons with direct contact to secretions from the nose or throat of the infected persons."

Siewe said there are some steps that can be taken to help reduce the risk of contracting meningitis. Cigarette smokers and children exposed to cigarette smoke have an increased risk, so it is important to stop smoking. Also, avoid upper respiratory infections by getting the influenza vaccine. Cover the mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing and wash hands frequently.

"Living a healthy lifestyle to improve overall health increases your ability to resist disease," he said.



Mother's Day History

Contrary to popular belief, Mother's Day was not conceived and fine-tuned in the boardroom of Hallmark. The earliest tributes to mothers date back to the annual spring festival the Greeks dedicated to Rhea, the mother of many deities, and to the offerings ancient Romans made to their Great Mother of Gods, Cybele. Christians celebrated this festival on the fourth Sunday in Lent in honor of Mary, mother of Christ. In England this holiday was expanded to include all mothers and was called Mothering Sunday.

In the United States, Mother's Day started nearly 150 years ago, when Anna Jarvis, an Appalachian homemaker, organized a day to raise awareness of poor health conditions in her community, a cause she believed would be best advocated by mothers. She called it "Mother's Work Day."

Fifteen years later, Julia Ward Howe, a Boston poet, pacifist, suffragist, and author of the lyrics to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," organized a day encouraging mothers to rally for peace, since she believed they bore the loss of human life more harshly than anyone else.

In 1905 when Anna Jarvis died, her daughter, also named Anna, began a campaign to memorialize the life work of her mother. Legend has it that young Anna remembered a Sunday school lesson that her mother gave in which she said, "I hope and pray that someone, sometime, will found a memorial mother's day. There are many days for men, but none for mothers."

Anna began to lobby prominent businessmen like John Wannamaker, and politicians including Presidents Taft and Roosevelt to support her campaign to create a special day to honor mothers. At one of the first services

organized to celebrate Anna's mother in 1908, at her church in West Virginia, Anna handed out her mother's favorite flower, the white carnation. Five years later, the House of Representatives adopted a resolution calling for officials of the federal government to wear white carnations on Mother's Day. In 1914 Anna's hard work paid off when Woodrow Wilson signed a bill recognizing Mother's Day as a national holiday.

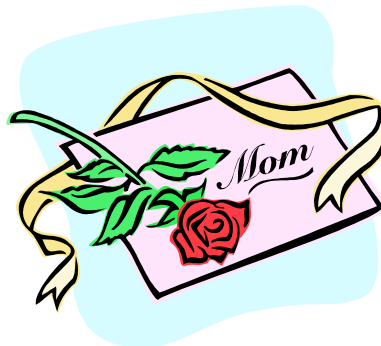
At first, people observed Mother's Day by attending church, writing letters to their mothers, and eventually, by sending cards, presents, and flowers. With the increasing gift-giving activity associated with Mother's Day, Anna Jarvis became enraged. She believed that the day's sentiment was being sacrificed at the expense of greed and profit. In 1923 she filed a lawsuit to stop a Mother's Day festival, and was even arrested for disturbing the peace at a convention selling carnations for a war mother's group. Before her death in 1948, Jarvis is said to have confessed that she regretted ever starting the mother's day tradition.

Despite Jarvis's misgivings, Mother's Day has flourished in the United States. In fact, the second Sunday of May has become the most popular day of the year to dine out, and telephone lines record their highest traffic, as sons and daughters everywhere take advantage of this day to honor and to express appreciation of their mothers.

"The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother." -Author Unknown

"My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual and physical education I received from her." -George Washington

Source: <http://mothers-day.123holiday.net/>



Maxims of Life

(Some good advice never really changes.....)

- ◆ Do not worry.
- ◆ Eat three square meals a day.
- ◆ Say your prayers.
- ◆ Be courteous to your creditors.
- ◆ Keep your digestion good.
- ◆ Exercise.
- ◆ Go slow and go easy.

Maybe there are some other things that your special case requires to make you happy, but, my friend, these I reckon will give you a good lift.

-Attributed to Abraham Lincoln, as quoted in the 1940 Everyman's Almanac



As the Days Get Warmer...Drink More to Rehydrate

Your body is a machine; a mechanical wonder that requires maintenance. As with any mechanical equipment, your body requires fluids to keep its parts operating properly. Water makes up nearly 60% of your body and is the most vital of these fluids.

You probably are thinking this is a “drink more water” article, and for starters, it is. You should be aware of the importance of drinking water and make a regular effort to get your 60-90 ounces per day.

What you might not know is the difference between drinking water and your body’s level of hydration. Hydration is how much of the water you are taking in that is actually getting into your body’s peripheral tissues like muscles and organs. For example, lots of people like to brag that they are drinking lots of water, yet when asked, they also admit that they are excessively using the toilet as well! Their urine is often clear and they are simply urinating the fluids right out; even worse, they may be diluting vitamin and mineral concentrations in their body by drinking too much.

For the sports enthusiast or those who engage in hard physical work, fluid levels are even more important, as you are working your “machine” at a much faster rate. When fluid levels are balanced, a person can enjoy higher levels of energy, greater endurance and less injuries. When his/her machine is well “oiled”, the machine runs longer, better, faster, stronger.

So here are some tips on creating a better level of hydration.



1. Sip your water throughout each day.
2. Drink purified or filtered water and be sure to drink it from a hardened plastic (polycarbonate), stainless steel or glass container. Soft plastics can “leach” into your water making it harder for the body to utilize the water for hydration. Water always tastes better from a better quality container as well; when it tastes better, you are more likely to drink it. Most importantly, the more contaminants in water, the harder it is for your body to absorb and utilize it for hydration.
3. Eat a good diet that is rich in minerals. That means lots of leafy green veggies! A body with a good mineral/electrolyte load will help the body hold onto its water and hydrate properly.
4. Consider electrolyte replacement drinks during or after any physical exertions. But beware! There are many popular “sports drinks” that are loaded with sugars (i.e. high fructose corn syrup), artificial flavors and sweeteners. These are not the best electrolyte replacements, and in fact, may not replace electrolytes at all. Simple is best with hydration/electrolyte drinks. Recommended are real fruit and vegetable juices that are not too sweet or concentrated (water them down by at least 50%).

Remember, hydration is not only good for your work, play or sports performance, it is good for your health, well-being and longevity.

*Source: Adapted from SCF Health and Nutrition-
The Body Machine: Drinking vs. Hydrating by Dr. Brett Saks,
ACF Sports Monthly Magazine*

Tea Time?

Q. What is chai? Is it healthful?

A. Chai (rhymes with pie), a traditional drink from Asia and the Middle East, has many variations, but always contains tea, milk and spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, ginger and cloves. Whether it’s good for you depends on how it’s prepared.

Though made with tea, which is non-caloric, the calories in chai run the gamut from 120 for eight ounces of Lipton Instant Chai to a whopping 640 for 24 ounces of Tazo Chai Frappucino Blended Crème at Starbucks, loaded with fat (15 grams)



and sugar (22½ teaspoons).

Moreover, new research suggests that if you add milk to your tea, proteins in the milk may block the action of tea’s catechins (antioxidants). So it’s unclear whether you’re really getting any of tea’s health benefits when you drink chai.

Bottom line: To avoid a calorie calamity, steer clear of fancy chai at coffeehouse chains. At the least, order it “skinny” (made with skim milk). And check the Nutrition Facts panel on packaged drinks.

Source: Environmental Nutrition, April, 2007

Time to “Concentrate” on Laundry Detergents

Small package, same value

You may have noticed something smaller in the laundry detergent aisle lately. A number of liquid laundry detergent containers are smaller than they used to be –but they still pack the same punch when it comes to cleaning clothes.

Concentrated laundry products – also referred to as “ultra” products – aren’t new to most consumers. These products have existed in one form or another, powdered or liquid, since the 1960s.

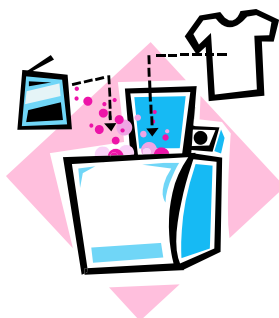
But the latest advances in liquid detergent formulation offer benefits to consumers and the environment.

- Smaller bottles use less plastic – which means less packaging to recycle or dispose of and less impact on the environment.
- Manufacturers use less water in product formulation – which means reduced use of this precious natural resource.

Smaller containers mean that less fuel is needed to

- ship these products to retailers, helping control greenhouse gases and other emissions.
- Small, lighter containers are easier to carry and store at home.

With concentrated detergents, consumers can still clean the same number of laundry loads as they did before.



Proper Dose = Better Clean

To get maximum value out of concentrated products, make sure you use the right amount of detergent – less than you would have used before. The product label describes how to select the right amount to use, usually measured with the product cap. Just as with your regular detergent, pour it right into the wash water or machine dispenser. The product should not be diluted before use.

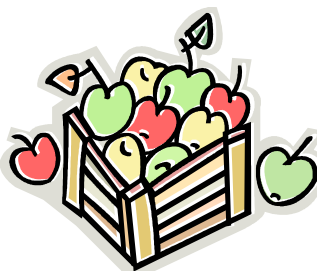
To find out more about how companies making the cleaning products you use every day, or the ingredients in them, are demonstrating their commitment to a sustainable environment through innovation, visit SDA’s Sustainability Central website, at www.cleaning101.com/sustainability.

Source: Soap and Detergent Association

Easy Crockpot Applesauce

5 pounds red apples, quartered, cored, skin left on
 ½ cup Splenda
 2 teaspoons apple pie spice, or to taste
 ½ cup water

Place all ingredients in crockpot and cook on low overnight or all day. For chunky applesauce, stir only a little; for smooth, transfer to food processor or blender. The skin of the apples imparts a beautiful color. Serve warm or chill to serve later. Keeps several days refrigerated. This is an ideal warm-weather dessert, as it is healthful and requires a crockpot, not a kitchen-heating oven.



Serves 12.

Each ½ cup serving provides:

- 101 calories
- 0 g fat
- 0 g saturated fat
- 0 g trans fat
- 0 mg cholesterol
- 27 g carbohydrates
- 4.5 g fiber
- .5 g protein

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Mmm
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Leader Lesson

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| May | Free Month |
| June 28 | Eating Oklahoma Locally Grown |
| July 8-10 | OHCE State Meeting |
| July 26 | Generic Vs Name Brand |
| August 23 | Water Testing |

HCE Cookbook

Final preparations are being made to get the HCE Cookbook ready for the printer. Be thinking how many copies you would like to get for your family.

Kingfisher County Free Fair

The Kingfisher County Free Fair will be will August 28-30. Set up will be on August 27th from 1-3pm.

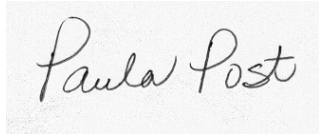
True Colors

A True Colors class will be offered on June 19th at the OSU Extension meeting room, 9:00-3:00 p.m. Please call if you are interested in attending this class.

Bread Baking

A Bread Baking Class will be offered on June 12th from 1-4 pm at the OSU Extension office in Guthrie. The class will include bread baking tips for freshly milled wheat and No-Knead Bread. Please call if you are interested in attending this class. I would be happy for you to ride with me to Guthrie!

Paula Post
Extension Educator



What Do You Know About Oklahoma?

Test your knowledge of Oklahoma. Take this simple quiz and find out what you know about some of Oklahoma's fun facts. Select an answer for each of the following ten questions and then compare your answers with the answer key below. See www.netstate.com for more on our great state!

- What famous baseball player was born in Spavinaw, Oklahoma?
 - Henry Louis (Lou) Gehrig
 - Roger Eugene Maris
 - Mickey Charles Mantle
- What is the highest point in Oklahoma?
 - Gaudalupe Peak (8,749 feet)
 - Mount Sunflower (4,039 feet)
 - Black Mesa (4,973 feet)
- What color is the field of the Oklahoma State flag designed in 1911?
 - Dark Blue
 - Red
 - White
- How many separate land regions can be found in the state of Oklahoma?
 - 10
 - 3
 - 5
- What is the official state amphibian of Oklahoma?
 - Spotted Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*)
 - Bull Frog (*Rana catesbeiana*)
 - Barred Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum mavortium*)
- What is the capital city of Oklahoma?
 - Ada
 - Oklahoma City
 - Tulsa
- What state borders Oklahoma on the south?
 - Texas
 - Colorado
 - Kansas
- Which of these is the motto of the state of Oklahoma?
 - Industry
 - Labor conquers all things
 - Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain
- How many distinct Native American tribes make their home in Oklahoma?
 - 28
 - 19
 - 55
- Which of these is a nickname for the state of Oklahoma?
 - The Sooner State
 - The Artesian State
 - The Show Me State

Answers:

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 1-C | 4-A | 7-A | 10-A |
| 2-C | 5-B | 8-B | |
| 3-B | 6-B | 9-C | |

Spring Cleaning for a Healthier Home

Add just a few more chores to your spring cleaning routine and you can help improve your family's health and safety. Here are some steps worth taking:

Go On Mold Patrol. Exposure to mold can trigger respiratory ailments and allergic reactions. While cleaning, check for the discoloration and musty odor that signal mold. If you find mold, clean it up with a strong solution of soap and water or a solution of 1 cup of bleach in 5 gallons of water.

Get Your Chimney Cleaned. If you regularly use a wood-burning fireplace or stove, have your chimney professionally cleaned at least once a year to avoid soot buildup, which can expose you to dangerous fumes and increase fire risk.

Target Dust Mites. These microscopic insects can make themselves at home in your carpets, pillows and furniture, and trigger allergic reactions or asthma attacks. Get rid of clutter that can harbor dust and subsequently dust mites. Wash bedding in hot water, zip mattresses and pillows into mite-proof cases, and clean or remove your carpets.

Clear Out Your Medicine Cabinet. All drugs and vitamins gradually break down and lose strength over time. Our consultants recommend that you discard pills two to five years past their expiration date, depending on storage conditions. (Ideal storage—not in a bathroom but in a dry, cool place—can extend a drug's shelf life.) Throw out drugs or vitamins of any age that show signs of spoilage, such as crumbly tablets, sticky or melted capsules, or a change in color. Don't flush drugs down the toilet unless the patient's information insert says it's safe to do so.

Power Up Your Alarms. Replace the batteries in your smoke and carbon-monoxide detectors once a year. Making that part of your annual spring cleaning can help you remember. Also test the alarms at least monthly to make sure that they're operating properly.

Source: *Consumer Reports on Health*, May 2007

